

Message Text

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DRAFTED BY EA/EX:RSCARRITT:WG

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: AFSP, ASEC, APER (O'BRIEN, ROBERT P., FSR-7)

SUBJECT: STAFFING

FOR CHARGE FROM SCARRITT

REF: VIENTIANE 6214

1. THE EXCHANGE OF STATE 256821 AND REFTTEL HAS PERHAPS WARPED THE RESPECTIVE POSITIONS A BIT OUT OF FOCUS. SY WAS ENDEAVORING IN ITS MESSAGE TO GET AN UP-TO-DATE READING ON WHAT TOOLS AND FACILITIES O'BRIEN HAD TO WORK WITH AS RSO UNDER THE REDUCED STAFFING AND LOCAL CIRCUMSTANCES IN VIENTIANE. IT WOULD APPEAR THAT THE DEPARTMENT'S MESSAGE WAS MISUNDERSTOOD AS EXPRESSING SOME DISSATISFACTION WITH O'BRIEN'S PERFORMANCE OF HIS SECURITY OFFICER RESPONSIBILITIES. THIS WAS NOT THE DEPARTMENT'S INTENTION.

2. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE EMBASSY'S ASSESSMENT THAT O'BRIEN IS FULLY OCCUPIED WITH GSO/PSO FUNCTIONS GOES BEYOND THE RESULT ANTICIPATED WHEN THOSE DUTIES WERE COMBINED SOME TIME AGO. IT WAS THE DEPARTMENT'S THOUGHT THAT O'BRIEN WOULD

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PRIMARILY PERFORM HIS PROFESSIONAL SECURITY RESPONSIBILITIES

WITHIN THE EXISTING LIMITATIONS, AND FOR THE BALANCE OF HIS TIME WOULD PERFORM GSO OR ANY OTHER FUNCTIONS WITHIN HIS

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE AND COMPETENCE. NOW THE TAIL WOULD APPEAR TO BE WAGGING THE DOG.

3. SO THAT BOTH YOU AND WE ARE ONCE AGAIN COORDINATED, PLEASE REVIEW THE EXTENT OF THE GSO FUNCTIONS TO BE PERFORMED AND ADVISE US AT YOUR EARLY CONVENIENCE WHETHER THEY ARE PRECLUDING O'BRIEN'S PERFORMING HIS PROFESSIONAL SECURITY OFFICER RESPONSIBILITIES, LIMITED AS THEY MAY BE UNDER THE EXISTING CIRCUMSTANCES. ON THE BASIS OF MY VISIT TO THE POST I HAVE TOLD SY THAT ALL OF THE SECURITY RESPONSIBILITIES WERE BEING PERFORMED THAT COULD BE ACQUITTED. IF I AM CORRECT IN THIS ASSESSMENT IT WOULD BE HELPFUL IF THIS COULD BE CONFIRMED TO SY. (I RECOGNIZE THAT DURING MY PARTICULAR VISIT THE ESSENTIAL PREOCCUPATION WAS ON GSO MATTERS, BUT NEVERTHELESS I FELT THAT THE SUPERVISION OF THE MARINE GUARD DETACHMENT, THE LOCAL GUARDS ON VARIOUS PROPERTIES, AND THE OTHER SECURITY FUNCTIONS WERE BEING WELL-HANDLED; I DID NOT COME AWAY WITH A SENSE THAT THE GSO TASKS WERE PRECLUDING O'BRIEN'S FINDING TIME FOR HIS SECURITY RESPONSIBILITIES.)

4. TO SUMMARIZE, THE DEPARTMENT TOOK A CALCULATED DECISION TO KEEP A PROFESSIONAL SECURITY OFFICER AT THE POST AND TO FILL IN HIS FREE TIME BY PERFORMING SUCH GSO TASKS AS WERE WITHIN HIS CAPABILITY. THIS REMAINS OUR COMMON OBJECTIVE. IN THE LIGHT OF THIS OBJECTIVE, IF YOU TRULY CAN MAKE A CASE FOR ADDITIONAL GSO MANPOWER, YOU SHOULD DO SO, ALTHOUGH WE ARE BOTH DESIROUS OF AVOIDING ANY INCREASES TO THE EMBASSY STAFF UNDER THE EXISTING CONDITIONS. KISSINGER

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